PRINCESS COMICS
氷栗優
Yuu Higuri
カンタレラ
Cantarella
2

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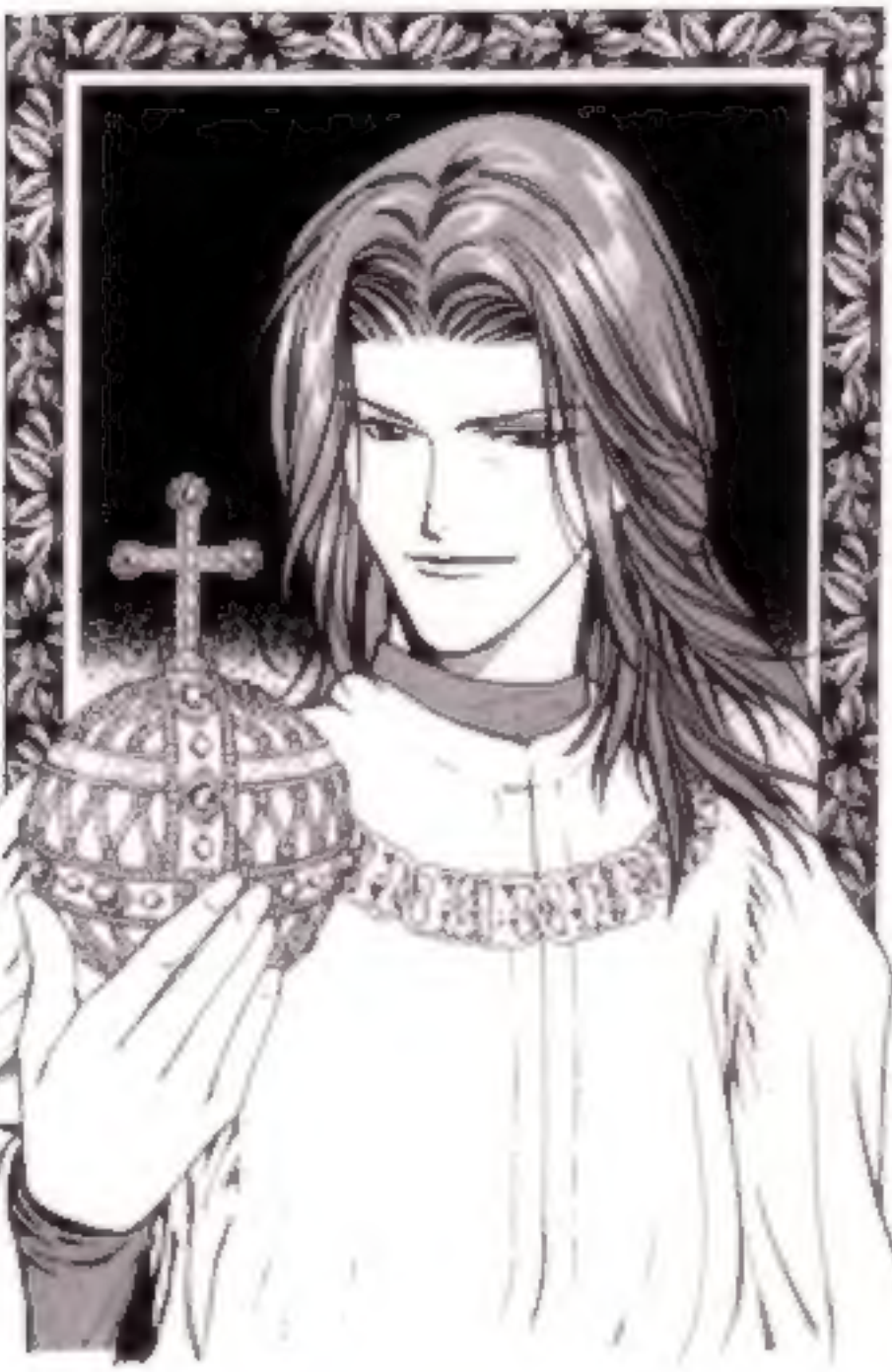
PRINCESS COMICS

プリンセス・コミックス

呪われた己の存在を認め、歴史の表舞台に躍り出たチェーザレ。父である法王を後ろ楯に次々と策を練る彼の巨大な野望とは!?



Yuu Higuri

My latest move brought me closer to the opera house in Takaratsuka. ♡ From my quarters, I'm calmed by the sight and spirit of the lovely Zenne.

Yuu Higuri's Works

■ Princess Comics

TENSHI NO HITSUGI (Ave Maria)

■ Bonita Comics

FLOWER

■ Bonita Comics Special

LOST ANGEL

Cantarella

Volume 2, chapter 5

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STORM IN HEAVEN

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プリンセスGOLD掲載

2

Yuu Higuri

PRINCESS COMICS

ケテルビ

Caytarella

Cantarella

dompour

I'D ALWAYS WONDERED ...

WHY YOU'RE SO SPECIAL.

IT'S AN UNLUCKY, GRUESOME AURA.

IT'S POINTLESS TO THINK BADLY OF YOU...

EVEN THOUGH IT MAKES ME FEEL SICK.

I KNOW ...

THAT A WICKED AURA STIRS AND POURS FORTH FROM YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.

AT LAST ...

I UNDER-STAND IT.

YOU CAME HERE TODAY BECAUSE OF THE DUCHY OF GANDIA, RIGHT?

BUT YOU DON'T HAVE A CHANCE... FATHER PLANS TO GIVE IT TO ME.

THE ONLY PATH BEFORE YOU IS TO BECOME A MONK AND SERVE GOD.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S A WEEPING FATHER'S LOVE, BROTHER?

AND GO INTO GOD'S BOSOM AT THE END!

YOU'RE JUST A CHILD SOLD TO SATAN.

YOU'LL BE EATEN BY THE DEVIL WHEN FATHER'S AMBITION IS REALIZED.

I JUST HEARD THAT ... A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT? DON'T YOU KNOW THE DEPTHS OF OUR FATHER'S AMBITION?

HE'LL DO ANYTHING TO SATISFY HIS AMBITION.

HIS GOAL IS TO WIELD THE ULTIMATE POWER OF THE POPE!

THAT ...

ISN'T TRUE ...

SLAM

AH!

IT'S NO USE GOING TO SEE HIM!

HE WON'T MEET WITH YOU!

OW!

splash

YOU'RE JUST A TOOL

FOR OUR FATHER'S AMBI-TION!

IT'S NOT TRUE!

THAT'S A LIE! EVEN IF HE DOESN'T TREAT ME LIKE JUAN OR LUCRETIA ...

HE'S STILL MY FATHER BY BLOOD

OUR FATHER SOLD YOU FOR HIS AMBITION!

NO!

WHY ARE YOU LOOKING AWAY FROM ME?

ARE YOU AFRAID? INTIMI-DATED?

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU'RE LOOKING AWAY FROM, DAD?

WHY?

SEE ME DAD?

DON'T YOU

I THOUGHT THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE...

THE WORLD . IS CRUMBLING

I LOST EVERY-THING

WHEN I SHED MAR-RONE'S BLOOD

CE... SARE.

HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE ...?

CLICK

IT ISN'T TRUE... RIGHT?

THE THINGS JUAN SAID...

DAD...

turn

...!

I DON'T REMEMBER SUMMONING YOU TO ROME

GO BACK, CESARE.

SLAP

!

DAD!

CLICK

CLICK

YOU THINK ME SO UNLUCKY ...

I LOVED YOU...

BUT ...

EVEN THAT MEANS NOTHING TO YOU!

clench

...!

slam

creak

CE ...

THEY WE Gr ME OWN IT'S HARD TO BREATHE

IT'S HEAVY

stumble

THE WORLD... IS CRUM- BLING

PONT

ZA ..

...NOZZA...

-VAN-
OZZA
!
...

VANOZZA
...
BEAUTIFUL,
BLESSED
LADY...

BUT
...

YOUR
LIGHT IS
TOO FAR
AWAY...

DARKNESS

THIS FAMILIAR WORLD OF DARK-NESS...

I THINK THE BEST THING TO DO IS BE EATEN UP...

AH ...!?

fade

...!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

YOU'LL FALL!

crumble

CHI ...

ARO ...

!

ANYWAY, COME OVER HERE WHERE IT'S SAFE.

CHI-ARO ...

NO, MICHE-LOTTO ...

YOU CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME.

I'LL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO DO SOME-THING GREAT. ON YOUR WINGS OF DEATH ...

SWEEP ME AWAY FROM THIS UGLY WORLD!

!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE...

LEFT FOR ME...

COME ...

CHIARO.

slide

STEP

...!

!?

I CAN'T!

I CAN'T KILL YOU!

CLANK

DAMN IT!

Ch!

I HEARD YOUR CONVERSATION WITH JUAN A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

SOR-RY ...

BUT ...

YOU FEEL PITY OVER MY CURSED BIRTH.

THEN ...

I DON'T THINK I THAT'S CAN'T IT FIND ... THE RIGHT WORDS ...

GRAB

SHOOT!

!

WHAT!?

NO! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!

HA!

YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD PERSON ...

THAT YOU'LL SHOW MERCY TO THE PITIFUL CESARE!?

YOU'RE LIKE A DYING BEAST FROZEN WITH FEAR.

IT ISN'T LIKE YOU.

push

LET ME GO!

CE-SARE?

LET ... ME GO...

IT'D BE EASY FOR ME TO KILL YOU LIKE THIS...

BUT I THINK THAT WOULD BE A HORRIBLE THING TO DO.

FOR ME ...

URH ...

AH!

USUD

AH!

AHH!

OW!

CE-SA-RE!

LET GO!

GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!

IF YOU WON'T KILL ME, YOU'RE USE-LESS!

DON'T DO ANY-THING HASTY!

LOOK OUT

STAY AWAY FROM THERE!

SHRIEK

CESARE!

I'LL PUT AN END TO EVERY-THING NOW...

DON'T COME NEAR ME, CHIARO.

WHY?

WHY DID HE...!

...!

WHOOSH

I WONDER IF I'M HAVING A NERVOUS BREAK-DOWN ... FROM STANDING WATCH OVER SANTAN-JERO'S PRISON.

DON'T WORRY SO MUCH! IT'S MARSHAL BARTRONO'S ORDER, SO WE HAVE TO HELP OUT!

! DID YOU HEAR SOME-THING?

IT'S JUST THE WIND.

HA HA HA HA WELL, LET'S JUST FORGET ABOUT HIM ... UNTIL CHIARO COMES BACK!

What sloppy guards

Ah ...

Ugh ...

RATTLE

slance

RATTLE

Ah ...

I'M SURE

I'LL SEE YOU LATER

SORRY... I CAN'T GO TO YOU BECAUSE I HAVE SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO...

DOES DAD REALIZE I'M HERE?

IT'S A SECRET UNDERGROUND PASSAGE THAT'S BEEN FORGOTTEN FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS

GROAN

Gaga it's loud!

CREAK

THIS IS A SECRET PLACE THAT I'VE LIVED IN FOR YEARS, AND NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT IT BUT ME.

IT'S MUCH SAFER THAN OUTSIDE... FOR PEOPLE LIKE HIM AND I...

WELL, YOU'RE ALIVE.

!

LET'S LOOK AT YOUR WOUNDS ...

slide

THIS S A SERIOUS WOUND. .

NO WONDER, CONSIDERING THE HEIGHT HE FELL FROM.

IT'S STRANGE THAT HE LIVED

...

WHAT'M I GOING TO DO...?

Haaa.

ASSASSINS SHOULDN'T BE HELPING THEIR TARGETS!

FIRST,

I'LL NEED SOME WATER AND A CLOTH TO STOP THE BLEEDING. ALL THAT'S UPSTAIRS...

THERE'S SOME-TH NG ABOUT HIM...

BUT ..

I CAN'T JUST- LEAVE HIM ALONE

SNUFF

swish
swirl
swish
flicker

RISE

GRAB

FLINCH

...

Go

...

!

...

WHAT'S. THIS FOREBOD NG ...

!

Gg ...

Haa ...

BANG

!

CE-
SA-
RE!?

WHE-RE'D YOU COME FROM!?

!

GR!

RUSH

tremble

...!

I'M SOME-THING SIMILAR ...

BUT I DON'T LIKE BEING CALLED ONE OF THEM.

I'M JUST A PASSING WIZARD.

GET OUT OF HERE! ARE YOU ANOTHER PRIEST!?

MOVE!

WIZARD OR NOT, I'LL ATTACK YOU IF YOU DON'T GET OUT OF MY WAY!

I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT.

JUST KEEP IN MIND, IF YOU GET THAT THING OFF HIM, HE'LL DIE.

!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN!?

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO TELL YOU THAT.

CESARE LOST HIS LINK TO LIFE...

IT'S THE DEVIL THAT'S EAGERLY HOLDING HIS BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER...

BECAUSE HIS BODY IS A GOOD FOOTHOLD INTO THE WORLD.

!

JOINING WITH THE DEVIL...

IS HIS ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVING ...

STOP AND THINK A MOMENT ...

THIS MOMENT OF WEAKNESS MAY BE GODSENT.

IF HE LIVES,

HE'LL BE THE CHILD FATED TO TURN THIS WORLD INTO A LIVING HELL.

PERHAPS YOU SHOULD EASE HIS MISERY...

THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS.

EITHER WAY, IT'S UP TO YOU.

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN CHASE AWAY THE DEVIL.

WHY!?

I'M NOT EVEN RE-LATED TO HIM!

WHY SHOULD I HAVE THE POWER TO DECIDE HIS FATE!?

lift

...!

IF THE DEVIL'S POWER MAINTAINS HIS LIFE...

HE'LL GROW TWISTED, AND DARKNESS WILL HANG OVER HIM IF HE CANNOT CONTROL THE DEVIL'S POWER.

!?

BUT THEN, YOU MEAN THAT EVERY-THING WILL WORK OUT IF I CAN CONTROL IT FOR HIM!

!?

W... WELL, I GUESS THAT'D WORK ...

How opti mistic

CONSIDERING I'M AN ASSASSIN OUT TO KILL H.M.

WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY IS HARDLY NORMAL.

BUT HE SHOULDN'T DIE HERE LIKE THIS.

HE IS THE ONE WHO HAS THE POWER TO DO SO!

HE CAN SHAPE HIS OWN FUTURE AS LONG AS HE LIVES.

THEN,

IT MIGHT BE WORTH IT TO INTERVENE.

IT'S ALL OVER IF HE DIES NOW.

AND...

THERE'S SOMETHING HELPLESS

ABOUT THE WAY HE LOOKS

-SFX: SSST-

CHI ...

A... RO ...!

Ahhh!

SO I ACCIDENTALLY THOUGHT... I WANT TO PROTECT HIM.

THIS IS THE POWER OF DARK-NESS ...

HIS CUTS ARE HEALING ...

!

HIS BODY S ABSORB NG THE DARK-NESS. .

AND YOU THINK YOU CAN CHANGE HIS FATE?

Hmph.

WHAT ARRO-GANCE.

AH WELL, IT SEEMS CESARE'S ALLOTTED TIME ON EARTH HASN'T RUN OUT.

BUT BEWARE OF HIM HOLDING A GRUDGE.

IT SEEMS HE'D HAVE RATHER DIED HUMAN ...

THAN BE BORN AGAIN INTO DARK-NESS.

WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY!?

ME? WELL, I'M SOMETHING OF AN ONLOOKER, A ROMANTICIST SEEKING THE TRUTH.

I'M A MAN WHO SEES AND KNOWS ALL.

I'M INTERESTED IN LORD CESARE HERE...

BECAUSE HE'S SUCH A DELIGHTFUL MYSTERY.

SWAT

SWAT

THAT'S JUST CREEPY.

...

AT LEAST, NOT ON THE OUT-SIDE

I'M AFRAID.

WELL, YOU DON'T SEEM ... TO HAVE CHANGED ...

sigh

BUT... YOU MIGHT JUST MANAGE TO CHANGE HIS DESTINY.

SOME DAY, YOU MAY REGRET YOUR CHOICE.

STORM IN HEAVEN

Proudly Presents:

Cauntaurella

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DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

THE MOR-NING BELLS . .

IS IT ALREADY THIS LATE!?

Hustle

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL THE TIME IN HERE.

SO FAR ...

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO CHANGE ..

step

Sigh

ba-dump

ba-dump

THAT WAS

THE DARK-NESS SHOWING THAT NIGHT-MARE

BUT, WHAT COULD EXPLAIN THIS..!?

ALL OF HIS INJURIES DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE.!

IT SEEMS HE'D HAVE RATHER DIED AS A HUMAN... THAN BE BORN AGAIN INTO THE DARK-NESS.

I SHOULD KILL HIM NOW-

TO PREVENT HIM FROM AWAKENING AS A MONSTER-

Squeeze

MAYBE ...

ALL BECAUSE I WANTED TO KEEP MYSELF SATISFIED

.

HE'LL GO THROUGH PAIN AND ANGUISH

...

HE MIGHT AS WELL DIE A HUMAN-

CLANK

DAMMIT!

WHAT ...

HAPP-ENED TO ME!?

RUB

RUB

BORN IN A FAMILY OF ASSASSINS, AS MICHELOTTO,

I THOUGHT NOTHING OF SLAUGHTER...

WHEN MY WORK IS DONE MY FATHER WILL BE FREE.

AND I CAN'T DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO KILL HIM!?

I JUST HAVE TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THIS MESS.

AH, FORGET IT. THERE'S NO POINT IN OBSESSING OVER IT..

SORRY, BUT I'... BE TAKING THESE KEYS.

OWW!

NGGH!

BAM

WAM

!

YOU!

AND EVEN IF I END UP BEING HUNTED DOWN...

I'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT THEN!

IT'S ALRIGHT, FATHER.

IT'S ME, CHIARO.

I'LL OPEN THIS RIGHT AWAY ...

This is tough

click click

UH!?

UUUH ...!

click

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE,

JUST THE TWO OF US.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT WE'LL DO LATER. I'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT, SO LET'S BE FREE!

CHI...

AAA...

OOO..

OOPS ...

LORD BARTRONO ...!

shit

click

click

SHOOT.

THIS LOCK IS SO HARD TO TURN

IT'S RUSTED ON THE INSIDE!

I'M FINE.

YOU HAVING SOME TROUBLE THERE, CHIARO?

HM... WE-LL

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

WHY WASN'T I NOTIFIED THAT YOU'D COME BACK ALREADY?

IN RETURN FOR FULFILLING MY ORDERS, YOUR FATHER WAS TO BE SET FREE...

SO SINCE YOU'RE HERE, YOU MUST HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THEM ALREADY!

!

HO!

IS CESARE THAT POWER-FUL?

IS HE EVEN ABLE TO BEAT "MICHE-LOTTO"?

SAY WHAT-EVER YOU WANT!

I'M QUITTING THIS MISSION!

I CAN'T... KILL HIM.

SLIDE

QUIT-TING?

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN?

I

DASH!

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A "NO"!

WON'T YOU ...

THINK THIS OVER?

I

HMPH.

CLANG

!

IF YOU CARE ABOUT YOUR FATHER, DON'T YOU DARE PULL YOUR SWORD!

UGH!

IT'S A SHAME.

I RAISED YOU MYSELF TO BE A FIRST RATE ASSASSIN ...

BANG

CREAK

WHAT ... THE!?

SHIT, THE DOOR WAS UN-LOCKED!

ARGHHHHHH!

F... FATH-ER!

DON'T HESITATE, HE'S UNARMED!

GO AFTER HIM!!

AGH!

PICK

CLANK

BANG

AHHH!

UGH!

SWING

DRAG

DRAG

shudder

FATHER ...!

CHI-

CHIA-RO...

AMA-ZING ...

IT'S BEEN SO LONG.

DO YOU ...

ACTUALLY REMEMBER ME...?

CLANG!

WATCH OUT...! BEHIND YOU!

HAH!

YOU DES-ERVE THIS!

.....!

WAM!

ACK!

WHA... WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?

GRAAAAAAAAHHHH

FATHER!

DIE ...

!?

STAB

Father!!

SQUEEZE

GET ... OFF OF ME ...!

CRACK

ST... STOP!

STAB

YOU MONS-TER!!

BART-RONO !!

HUFF HUFF

DON'T MOVE,

YOU'RE NEXT, CHIARO.

I'LL SLIT YOUR THROAT ...!

.....!
Step
TAP

SLIDE

HUH?

SO YOU'RE JUST A CHILD, AFTER-ALL.

DON'T WORRY, I'LL SEND YOU TO HIM RIGHT AWAY.

SLASH

!

HE. WAS JUST PRETENDING TO BE WEAK TO PICK UP THE SWORD'?

SWIFT

NEXT TIME ...

I WON'T MISS.

THIS IS RE-VENGE ...

FOR MY FATHER!

!

CLACK

SWIFF

!

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU!?

HE THREW IT FROM OVER THERE...

!

WAIT... THAT VOICE IS...

I WON'T LET YOU KILL HIM, CHI-ARO.

CESARE BORGIA! WHY... IS HE HERE!?

I SAID ...

HUH ...?

DASH-

SINCE WHEN...!? HE MUST'VE HEARD WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT!

WE'LL PUT HIM TO GOOD USE...

TOO LATE, LORD BART-RONO.

THIS FOR-TRESS ...

IS UNDER THE POPE'S CONTROL ...

KNOWING THAT, EVERYTHING STARTS TO FIT TOGETHER.

IF YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SENT "MICHE-LOTTO" AFTER ME,

THAT MEANS SOMEONE HAS SENT YOU... ISN'T THAT RIGHT, MARSHAL OF THE SANTAN JAIL?

BECAUSE I WITNESSED THE PLOT TO KILL MY FATHER,

NOT AT ALL! I DIDN'T SAY THAT.

THAT IS... A SIN AGAINST GOD HIM-SELF!

YOU THINK THAT THE POPE WAS PART OF THE CONSPIRA-CY!?

THAT MEANS ...

POPE INNOCENT THE 8TH HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF IT, AND COULDN'T EVEN HAVE COME UP WITH IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.

I HAVE NO DOUBTS THAT THERE IS SOMEONE WORKING IN H S SHADOW...

AND TO BE HONEST, NOT EVEN I, HIS SON,

KNOWS WHO CONJURED THIS SCHEME.

HUH !?

HE CAN'T DO ANYTHING ALONE ...

SO HE WOULD NEED SOME SORT OF HELP.

HIS SON..!? HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE...

RUSTLE.

OOH,

WHAT POWER-FUL WIND!

WOOSH

RUSTLE.

WHAT'S WRONG ...?

CAR-DINAL ROV-ERE?

YOUR FACE IS BLUE!

THIS UNPLEASANT FEELING...

IS IT MY IMAGINATION?

!?

Hehe...

IT'S NO-... NOTHING... NOTHING AT ALL.

WHAT... WAS THAT ...?

YOU SHOULD HURRY UP,

AND DO AWAY WITH THOSE WHO ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU ...

CESARE!

!

SPLURT

WOBBLE

HUH...

WHAT ...?

STAY BACK, CHIARO.

MY HANDS... ARE PARALYZED ...

WHAT IS THIS SMELL ...? IT'S SO SWEET ...

HE ISN'T... HUMAN

AS I THOUGHT!

SWIP

SINCE WHEN HAS CESARE ...?

GOLDEN
...

EYES!

WOBBLE

THUD

HE'S JUST UNCON-SCIOUS ...

YOU ...

KILLED HIM...?

WHEN HE WAKES UP...

HE'LL BE BUT A PUPPET,

AND I WILL CONTROL HIS STRINGS.

clench

HE HAS BECOME A MONSTER ...

I TOLD YOU ...

YOU SHOULD'VE KILLED ME SOONER-

I WISHED FOR DEATH,

BUT YOU IGNORED MY PLEA.

HIS EYES ARE NORMAL AGAIN.

.....!

I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.

!

CHIARO... NO...! MICHE-LOTTO!

THAT WILL BE YOUR ATONEMENT FOR YOUR SIN,

YOU'LL WITNESS THIS UNTIL THE END.

IF I WAS BORN INTO THIS WORLD...

TO BECOME A CONQU-EROR,

I MIGHT ...

STAGGER

!

YOU JUST LOST TONS OF BLOOD.

WE NEED TO BANDAGE YOUR WOUNDS.

NO... I'M FINE.

IT'LL HEAL.

BE ...

SAVED ...

CE ...

CESARE !?

DON'T TOUCH IT ...!

BUT ..

YOU SAW IT, DIDN'T YOU? IT'S POISON.

I SEE... NOW IT MAKES SENSE.

A LITTLE BIT WON'T WORK ON ME.

I'M SOMEWHAT IMMUNE TO POISON.

I am an assassin after all-

I COULD TASTE IT TO PROVE IT!

IDIOT. You'd die.

THE REASON MY HEAD SPINS FROM THAT SWEET SMELL- MY FALTERING HEARTBEAT...

CANTA-RELLA ...

WHAT?

IT WAS WRITTEN IN A BOOK OF PLANTS...

THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE A POISONOUS PLANT WITH THAT NAME... THOUGH NOWADAYS, VIRTUALLY NO ONE'S HEARD OF IT.

SWEET ...

AND PARALYZING.

IT'S VERY MUCH LIKE YOU ...

CANTA-RE...A ...

DIG.

DIG.

WHEW.

HEH.

YOU WERE IN PAIN FOR SO LONG.

AT LAST... YOU'RE FREE FROM IT.

GOOD-BYE, FATHER ...!

FLIP

IN THE END ...

I COULDN'T HELP HIM.

I WONDER WHAT HIS LIFE WAS LIKE...

STAYING IN A MOLE HILL ALL OF THE TIME.

caw caw caw

THANKS, CESARE ...

FOR BEING AT THIS FUNERAL.

STEP

STEP

STEP

TELL ME WHEN YOU'RE DONE.

I'LL BE DOWN HERE.

CHI-ARO.

I'LL SHOW YOU HOW WIDE THIS EARTH IS...

COME AND SEE ALL OF IT...

IF YOU'LL OBEY ME...!

BUT... EVEN IF HE IS ENVELOPED IN EVIL AT THIS POINT...

HEH.

AND ONLY A MOMENT AGO I WAS CRYING LIKE A BABY...

DING DONG

DING DONG

DING DONG

EVEN IF HE LEAVES THE PATH BEHIND HIM IN SHAMBLES

HE CAN- NO, HE WILL...

SOME DAY, HE'LL BE ABLE TO ATTAIN HIS DREAM-

4 Years Later - July 1492

OH, HOW HORRIBLE ...!

HE WAS SO HEALTHY ONLY A MOMENT AGO.

THE POPE!

OH, THE DEAR POPE ...

POPE INNOCENT THE 8TH!

?

GIVING UP HOPE ALREADY?

BA-DUM!

I WISHED FOR IT MYSELF ...

BUT I NEVER KNEW THAT...

MY LORD ...

WHAT SHALL I DO NOW?

I'M AFRAID.

TERRIBLY AFRAID!

LISTEN TO THE COUNTLESS BELLS.

THE NEXT TIME THEY RING YOU WILL BE THE POPE.

WHY DO YOU FEAR ME SO?

YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ARE ONLY A STEP AWAY.

SHH

SFX recoils

Y.. YOU

WHO ARE YOU!? HOW DID YOU...

DON'T MAKE SO MUCH NOISE. I'M SUPPOSED TO HAVE LEFT ROME.

IT'D BE A MESS IF I WERE FOUND HERE.

IT'S AL-RIGHT,

THE POISON THAT KILLED THE POPE WON'T BE FOUND.

I SEE

EVEN THE VERY BEST DOCTORS WILL AGREE THAT IT WAS A NATURAL DEATH.

I WAS TOLD THAT A DEVIL WOULD BRING ABOUT MY AMBITIONS.

IT'S EVERY-THING YOU WANTED.

YOU WILL, WITHOUT A DOUBT, BECOME THE NEXT POPE.

AS LONG AS YOU FULFILL MY WISHES ..

FATHER

SO THAT'S WHAT THAT MEANT

Cantarella

Chapter 7

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STORM IN HEAVEN

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CARDINAL RODE-RIGO,

IN ACCORDANCE WITH DIVINE LAW, THE CARDINALS HAVE ELECTED YOU TO BE POPE.

HAVE YOU DECIDED UPON A NAME FOR YOUR REIGN AS HOLY FATHER?

ALEXANDER.

ALEXANDER THE SIXTH!

THE POPE'S CARRIAGE IS APPROACHING ST. ANGELO'S BRIDGE!

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF HIM!

THESE PEOPLE ARE SO GAUDY.

THERE'S EVEN WINE IN THE FOUNTAIN.

THE STREETS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OVER BY THE FESTIVITIES.

ORI-GIN-ALLY.

YOU INTENDED TO JOIN THE PAPAL PROCESSION, DIDN'T YOU?

WASN'T THAT WHY WE CAME TO ROME?

HA...

THAT MAN HAD NO DESIRE FOR MY COMPANY.

HE WANTS TO AVOID ME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

ESPECIALLY ON SUCH A MOMENTOUS OCCASION ...

AH!

NO!!

slip

to

catch

HERE YOU GO,

YOUNG LADY.

WOW!

What are you saying?

They're gorgeous!

Hustle

YOU'RE BEING OVERT.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE...

WOW! YOU WOULDN'T THINK TWO HANDSOME MEN LIKE THAT WOULD COME MAKE A SUPPLI-CATION!

HEY, LOOK! LOOK!

TH ...

THANK YOU! ...

FROM NOW ON, YOU'RE NO LONGER CHIARO. YOU'RE MY COMPANION, MICHAEL DA CORELLIA.

IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, THEY'LL FIND OUT WHO YOU REALLY ARE.

IN ROME, THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD RECOGNIZE YOU.

smile

THAT'S WHY I'M WEARING THIS MASK, LIKE YOU TOLD ME.

BUT DON'T YOU THINK IT MAKES US EVEN MORE CONSPICUOUS?

What are you smiling about?

No-thing

It's creepy

glare

pant pant

WHY IS IT SO HOT...?

All hail Pope Alexander the 6th!

All hail the Pope!

SOMEHOW, I, HAVE-TO REACH-THE PAPAL THRONE

pant pant

!?

FA-
THER
...

EVERY-
THING
HAS BEEN
ARRA-
NGED.

THERE
IS NO
LONGER
...

ANY
REASON
TO HESITATE,
NOR ANYONE
TO STAND
IN YOUR
WAY.

AH,
YES
...

AS FOR THE
VENETIAN
BISHOPS...

AS
FOR
THE
REST
...

I WILL
NEED A
SMALL
AMOUNT OF
MONEY.

.....!

CESARE
....!?

TH...
THOSE
PEOPLE
...

THEY'RE
RENOWNED
FOR THEIR
STUBBORNNESS.
THEY COULD NOT
POSSIBLY HAVE
AGREED TO A
BRIBE...

NO.

THEIR
REPRE-
SENT-
ATIVE
IS 95
YEARS
OLD.

HE WAS
SLIGHTLY
DAFT,
BUT HE
LISTENED
TO
REASON.

HA
HA
...

glug glug

HERE, TAKE THIS!

AH

S...

SOME-BODY GET SOME WATER!

thud

HU-RRY!

HOLY FA-THER?!

AREN'T YOU HAPPY?

NOW YOU REALLY ARE THE MOST POWERFUL PERSON IN ALL OF ROME!

ha ha ha

!?
HE'S GONE?
I THOUGHT I SAW H.M IN THE CROWD BUT...

WILL I BE FOREVER HAUNTED BY HIS SHADOW? AFTER ALL, IT'S NOT LIKE HE'S MY KEEPER.

I'M POPE ALEXANDER THE 6TH! I DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID OF BEING CONTROLLED!

HOLY FA-THER?

IT WAS NOTHING. JUST A LITTLE HOT, THAT'S ALL.

PAY IT NO MIND.

I'M THE ONE WHO CONTROLS HIM!

AH,

I'M AFRAID THE LONG JOURNEY HAS EXHAUSTED THE HOLY FATHER...

HE REFUSES TO SEE ME?

I SEE.

LET'S GO, MICHEL-OTTO.

YES. THE HOLY FATHER'S INSTRUCTIONS ARE TO RETURN TO PISA IMMEDIATELY, AND CONTINUE YOUR STUDIES.

I CAME ALL THIS WAY TO CONGRATULATE HIM, AND THAT'S HIS RESPONSE?

FOR NOW.

I EXPECTED ABOUT THAT MUCH GRATITUDE, ANYWAY.

swish

YOU'RE FINE WITH THAT?

YOU'VE GROWN ...

THE OLD YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN HURT.

THE OLD ME ...

NO LONGER EXISTS...

YOU KNOW THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE, DON'T YOU?

CHI - A - RO.

SOMETIMES, CESARE'S OBSIDIAN EYES GLOW WITH A MALEVOLENT GOLDEN LIGHT.

I...

squeeze

SO FAR, THERE HAS BEEN NO OTHER MANIFESTATION OF THE DEVIL IN HIM.

HUH?

SNOW?

AH!

W... WHAT THE ...!?

step

step

HOW CRUEL,

BROT-HER!

AH!

THIS GIRL'S

...THE GIRL WITH THE ENDLESS EYES!

HOW COULD YOU COME HERE,

AND LEAVE AGAIN, WITHOUT VISITING ME?

HA HA,

IT'S JUST LIKE YOU TO GREET ME LIKE THIS.

tap

tap

tap

tap

tap

YOU'VE BECOME SO BEAUTIFUL, LUCRETIA!

I ALMOST DIDN'T RECOG-NIZE YOU.

BROT-HER!

BROTHER...

BROTHER!!

YOU'RE ALWAYS CRYING.

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE HORRIBLE.

YOU LEFT ME ALL ALONE!

WHY DIDN'T YOU EVER COME VISIT ME? COME MORE OFTEN FROM NOW ON!

AH, I'M CRYING SO HARD I CAN'T EVEN SEE YOU CLEARLY!

MICHELOTTO, MY ADORABLE LITTLE SISTER, LUCRETIA.

HERE, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU. THIS IS MICHAEL DA CORELLIA, A FRIEND FROM MY SCHOOL.

WELL, STOP CRYING,

OR YOU'LL SPOIL YOUR BEAUTY.

AS YOU WISH, LADY LUCRETIA.

I'M PLEASED TO MEET YOU, MICHAEL DA CORELLIA. MAY I ALSO CALL YOU MICHELOTTO?

I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD MEET HER AGAIN...

WHY THE MASK?

I'M SURE YOU WOULD BE VERY HANDSOME WITHOUT IT.

A LONG TIME AGO, MICHEL-OTTO'S FACE...

WAS HORRIBLY SCARRED IN A DUEL.

Huh?

OH!

I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T REALIZE...

WE-LL ...

THIS GUY COULD SPIN A WEB OF LIES EASILY...

NOW THAT YOU'RE FINALLY HERE,

I CAN SHOW YOU EVERY-THING!!

I TOLD ADRIANA TO PREPARE A FEAST FOR YOU.

AH, ACTUALLY, WE CAN'T DO THAT.

WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO RETURN TO PISA.

THIS WAS ONLY A FLEETING VISIT.

PISA'S SO FAR AWAY ...

I THOUGHT WE COULD FINALLY SPEND SOME TIME TOGETHER ...

NOT AGAIN! DON'T CRY, LUCRETIA.

I'M COMING HOME SOON. IT WON'T BE MUCH LONGER, THIS TIME.

AH,

RE-ALLY ?!

HON-ESTLY ?

CESARE

I CAN FEEL IT.

AND MY PREMONITIONS ALWAYS COME TRUE.

rustle
rustle

IF YOU LOOK AT IT FROM A DISTANCE,

ROME IS JUST A SMALL VILLAGE.

IT'S RARE FOR YOU TO BE SO FORMAL!

WHY ARE YOU STILL WEARING YOUR MASK? IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US.

HEY,

DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT! YOUR EYES BACK THERE WERE THE EYES OF A MONSTER.

MAY I ASK ...

WHAT YOU ARE PLAN-NING?

ACT-
UALLY
...

I LIKE YOU BETTER WITHOUT THE MASK.

GIVE IT BACK! YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A KID!

AH!

IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, CHI - A - RO!

!?

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO LUCRETIA?

ISN'T SHE YOUR SISTER?!

THAT GIRL
...

I WON'T DO ANYTHING TO HER.

IT'S ...

IT'S JUST THAT THE DARK CLOUDS THAT ENCIRCLE THIS WORLD PAY NO HEED TO WISHES OR DESIRES.

THEY DISTORT ALL LIFE.

SHE'S ...

ALREADY BEEN PULLED INTO THE VORTEX.

...still don't know what you're planning.

IT'S TOO LATE TO SAVE HER.

QUICKLY.

IT'S STARTING TO RAIN

THE DEMON WITH THE COLD, MALEVOLENT EYES, WHO TAMPERS WITH DESTINY..

AND THE SIMPLE BRAT, WHO LAUGHS WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD...

AH! YOU'RE RUNNING AWAY!

YOU COW-ARD!

ha ha ha ha ha

CHI-ARO,

HURRY UP!

ARE BOTH BALANCED IN A DELICATE EQUILIBRIUM WITHIN ONE FRAGILE HEART.

HOW DID THEY GET SO ENTANGLED? THAT IS ALL PART OF THE DEMON'S CURSE ...

Cantarella

Chapter 8

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STORM IN HEAVEN

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THANK YOU FOR RECEIV-ING ME.

I'M DELIGHTED TO MEET YOU, POPE ALEXANDER VI.

IT'S A LONG JOURNEY TO COME FROM PESARO TO VISIT US, GIOVANNI SFORZA.

AH! THAT MAN OVER THERE...!

I FEEL SO SORRY FOR LADY LUCRETIA.

THAT MAN BIDDING FOR HER HAND, COUNT GIOVANNI SFORZA OF PESARO, IS HARDLY AN IDEAL MATCH.

HE'S MORE THAN TWICE HER AGE! I HEARD THAT...

HE'S ALSO A WIDOWER!

EEH!

HOW HORRIBLE! AND SHE'S ENGAGED TO HIM?!

REA-LLY!

THOSE WOMEN ARE LIKE TWITTERING SPARROWS!

THE SFORZA FAMILY ...

THEIR BLOOD CONT-ROLS MILAN.

IT CAN'T BE HELPED. THE ENGAGEMENT IS THE TALK OF THE PALACE.

THIS IS A VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO SECURE OUR TIES THROUGH MARRIAGE.

EXAC-TLY! AND...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

GET BACK TO WORK IMMED-IATELY!

A...AH! LADY ADRIANA!

R... RIGHT AWAY!

BUT SHE'S SO AGAINST IT.

SHE'S BEEN SCREAMING THAT SHE WON'T HAVE HIM, AND REFUSING TO EAT FOR THREE DAYS NOW.

THAT GIRL HAS BEEN STUBBORN SINCE SHE WAS A CHILD!

THE POPE ALWAYS SPOILED HER.

THE ONLY ONE SHE'LL LISTEN TO IS HER BROTHER, CESARE ...

!

I... I SUPPOSE SO ...

« F CESARE COMES TO ROME ...!

WE CAN FINISH THIS, ONCE AND FOR ALL.

THAT'S IT! WE SHOULD SEND FOR HIM. THAT WAY,

LET'S TALK TO THE POPE! AFTER ALL, AS LUCRETIA'S GUARDIAN, I'LL BE BLAMED IF SHE COLLAPSES.

YOUR JOKES ARE AS AMUSING AS EVER ♡
THAT SOUNDS SO STRANGE FROM YOU
CALL ME DUVAN
JUST NOW
WHEN I HEARD THAT YOU WERE HERE I CAME AT ONCE

I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT NIGHT YOU VISITED ME IN PESARO.

WE DRANK AND CAROUSED UNTIL DAWN.

I HAVE NEED OF A POWERFUL ALLY.

SO, WHEN THIS OPPORTUNITY CAME UP, I KNEW I JUST HAD TO CALL UPON MY DEAR FRIEND CESARE!

YOUR SISTER MUST BE AS BEAUTIFUL AS YOU ARE. ♡

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING HER.

AT THE MOMENT, MY SISTER IS CHILDISHLY CONFUSED, BUT I'M SURE SHE WILL SOON COME TO SEE YOUR CHARMS, MY LORD.

LADY LUCRETIA!

PLEASE OPEN THE DOOR!

PLEASE!

AT LEAST TRY TO EAT SOME SOUP.

knock knock

LADY LUCRETIA!

NEVER!

NEVER EVER!

LET ME TRY, JULIA.

.....

YOU'LL DIE IF YOU KEEP THIS UP!

IT'S JULIA.

LUCRE-TIA?

LUC-RET-IA?

I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. IT'S YOUR OLDER BROTHER, CESARE.

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

WON'T YOU OPEN THE DOOR?

!...

EVEN LORD CESARE ...

IT'S HOPE-LESS.

creak

AH! LOOK!

DO YOU MIND CLOSING THE DOOR?

I'D LIKE TO BE ALONE WITH MY SISTER.

thud

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT HE COULD GET LUCRETIA TO OPEN THE DOOR THAT EASILY?

Cesare is so efficient!

stunned

WH-AT?

LUCRETIA HAS BEEN PERSUADED BY CESARE TO ACCEPT?

SHE HAS CONSENTED TO THE ENGAGEMENT WITH COUNT PESARO.

WHAT .. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

thump

thump

IS... IS THAT THE SAME CESARE AS THAT CHILD?

WHEN HE LOOKED AT ME... I JUST COULDN'T CONTROL MYSELF.

AH! SHE'S SO BEA-UTI-FUL!

whisper

ISN'T SHE SERENE?

MY BRIDE!

SHE REALLY IS LOVELY!

SMILE

SMILE

I'M A LUCKY MAN!

ha ha ha

BUT STILL ...

ONCE YOU BECOME MY WIFE, WE'LL BE HAVING LOTS OF CHILDREN.

WITH A BIT OF HELP, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ENDURE THAT, EH?

YOU'RE SO FRAGILE!

IT'S AS THOUGH YOU MIGHT BREAK IF I TOUCHED YOU.

COU-NT PES-ARO!

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

BROTHER...

WHERE ARE YOU?

AH!

SLAP

ST-OP!

dash

YOUR LADY IS STILL A VIRGIN.

THAT WAS A BIT MUCH, MY LORD.

ha ha ha

I SEE. SORRY.

BRO-
THER
...

BROTHER
...
SAVE
ME...

IT HURTS.
IT'S
HURTING
ME.

MY
HEART
FEELS
LIKE IT
WILL
FALL
APART.

...I
JUST
CAN'T
...

THIS
IS TOO
MUCH
...

THESE
FEELINGS
ARE...
UNBEARABLE.
IT'S AS
THOUGH
I MIGHT
NEVER
TOUCH YOU
AGAIN...

YOUR
PROFILE
IS AS
SERENE
AS THE
WHITE
MOON

IF I COULD FLY AWAY FROM HERE

whoosh

IF I COULD FLY LIKE THE BIRDS...

I WONDER IF I COULD REACH THE MOON?

WHAT IS IT WITH YOUR FAMILY AND JUMPING OFF BALCONIES?

DAM-MIT!

GRAB

HUH ?

!

WH-OA!

DON'T GRAB ME LIKE THAT. I WON'T DROP YOU.

A... AH!

HELP!

DAMN. MY MASK

AAA-AAH!

CAN YOU STAND?

!

You're safe now.

HEY.

thud

AH ...

HAA... HAA ...

YOU...

YOU'RE CHIARO, AREN'T YOU?

YOU SAVED ME ONCE BEFORE.

SHE... REM- EMB- ERED ...

And she's still looking at me with those endless I eyes.

...

I...
I JUST THOUGHT I MIGHT TOUCH THE MOON.
OR SOME-TH'NG LIKE THAT.
I WASN'T TRYING TO KILL MYSELF.
I HAVE TO KEEP MY PRO-MISE TO MY BRO-THER.
WHILE YOU'RE ALIVE ...
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BRING, EVEN IF YOU CAN'T SEE IT RIGHT NOW.
I KNOW ...
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING, BUT...
DEEP,
DEEP IN MY BREAST, WHERE THE MOON CASTS IT'S SHADOW UPON THE ETERNAL SPRING IN MY HEART.
BUT I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO SEA.. AWAY MY FEELINGS.
IT'S NOT LIKE THEY BRING ME ANY COMFORT.
BY "FEELINGS" DOES SHE MEAN...?
?!

WE'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!

SO YOU WERE HERE ALL ALONG?

THE LORDS AND LADIES ARE ALL WAITING TO MEET YOU!

I'M SORRY TO BOTHER YOU WITH SUCH MEANINGLESS TALK,

CHI-ARO.

LADY LUCR-ETIA?

CHIARO. WHAT A MYSTERIOUS MAN.

SHALL WE GO INSIDE?

THE NIGHT BREEZE IS COLD.

But

YOU WERE ALONE WHEN WE FOUND YOU...

?

CHIARO... LORD CHIARO?

WHO?

THE MAN WHO WAS JUST HERE...

I'M NOT ASH-AMED TO HOLD THAT NAME

HAVE TO CLING FIRMLY TO MY PR DE AND HOLD MY HEAD HIGH.

BECAUSE I AM THE SISTER OF THAT MAN...!

WELL THEN... THIS IS MY FIRST STEP

WAS HE AN ANGEL SENT BY GOD...

TO TEL. ME TO LIVE?

LUCRETIA BORGIA.

DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO TAKE OFF YOUR MASK?

shock

CES-ADE ...

SURELY THAT PREMONI-TION WASN'T ...

I KNOW. I'M GOING BACK SOON.

THE DIGNITARIES WERE LOOKING FOR YOU.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I KNEW ABOUT HER FEELINGS, AND I USED THEM.

... YES.

DO YOU ...

HATE ME, CHIARO?

HA HA.

DON'T MAKE THAT FACE.

IT DOESN'T SUIT YOU.

IT'S BECAUSE I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS THAT I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU FOR ALL THESE YEARS.

I KNOW THAT ..

THERE'S A REASON FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO. NO MATTER WHAT.

BUT... I LIKE YOU.

YOU CAN CONFIDE IN ME. I KNOW YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN.

I AM ... NO LONGER HUMAN.

JUST AS YOU ONCE DESIRED.

I... DON'T KNOW

I...

AND WHAT IF YOU END UP DESTROYING EVERYTHING, AND REDUCING THE WORLD TO DARKNESS AND CHAOS?

DO YOU REALLY WANT THAT?

I'LL KILL YOU ...

BEFORE I LET THAT HAPPEN.

Castarella

by Youn Gum

credits - chapter nine

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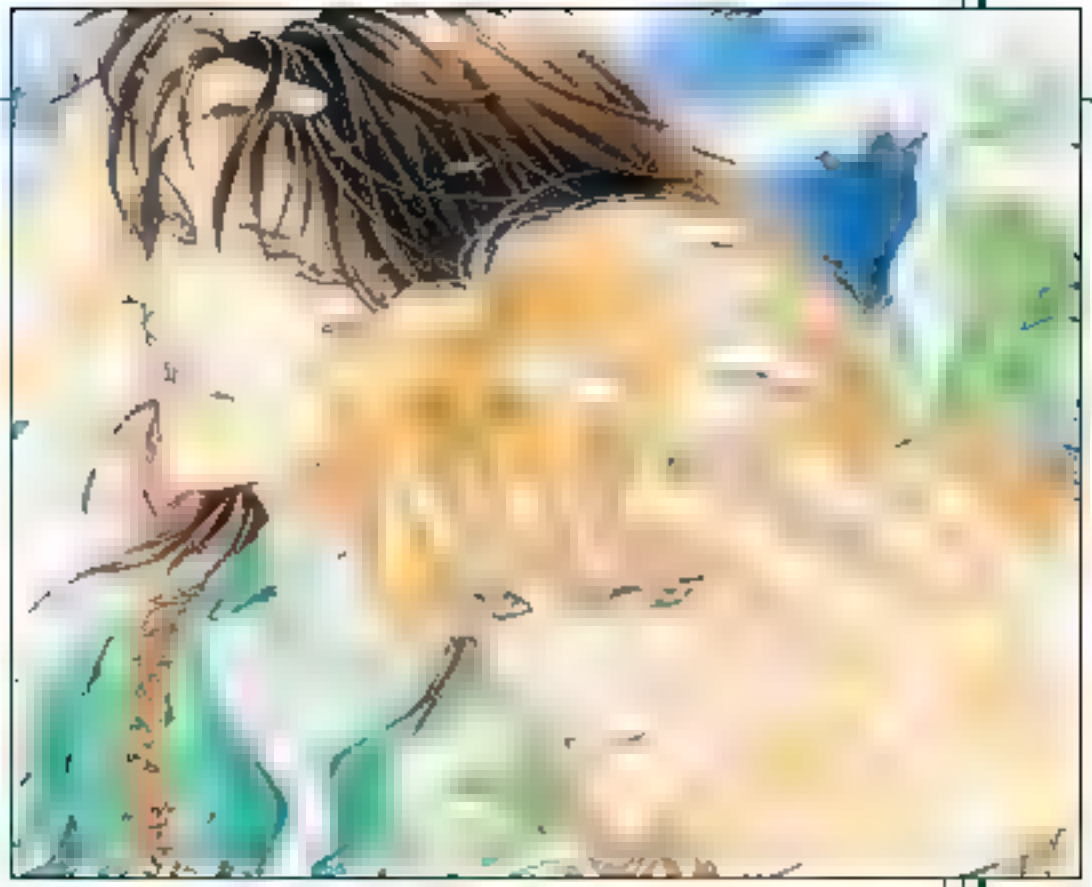

STORM IN HEAVEN

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PA
PAA
PA

APPARENTLY, ARRANGEMENTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE FOR JOFRE BORGIA,

THE POPE'S YOUNGEST CHILD, TO BE MARRIED AFTER LUCRETIA.

HIS FIANCEE IS THE ILLEGITIMATE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF ARAGON, PRINCESS SANCIA D'ARAGONNA.

LORD JOFRE IS LEAVING FOR NAPLES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEREMONY TO MEET HER.

BUT STILL ...

WHAT AN AWFUL CRYBABY!

HE'S STILL JUST A BRAT, ISN'T HE? POOR PRINCESS SANCIA.

LOOKS LIKE HE'S BEEN SPANKED.

HÅ HÅ! I GUESS SO

BUT YOU KNOW, BY MARRYING LUCRETIA OFF TO ONE OF MILAN'S SFORTZIA AND SENDING JOFRE OFF TO NAPLES ...

THIS SHOULD LIGHTEN THE HOSTILITY BETWEEN OUR NEIGHBORING STATES AND RESTORE BALANCE TO THE REGION.

A PITY THAT THE GROOM IS SO UNATTRACTIVE. EH?

smile

AH! POPE ALEXANDER THE SIXTH,

HE'S BRILLIANT, ISN'T HE?

LOOK! HE'S BEAMING WITH PRIDE.

DAMN!

FATHER!

I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR THE SAKE...

OF OUR HOLY FATHER.

HA, HA!

ENOUGH, ENOUGH. YOU'RE EMBARASSING ME.

OH, HOAN!

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY.

TO TELL ME THAT I WAS THE ONE WHO WOULD MARRY PRINCESS SANCIA.

HA.

I MUST ADMIT, HOWEVER, THAT I DID HOPE YOU HAD RECALLED ME TO ROME..

It does resemble her but

THE MOUTH IS OVERDOING IT. AND, SHE'S STILL A MEMBER OF THE SPANISH ROYAL HOUSEHOLD.

HER FAMILY CONNECTIONS WILL PROVE EXTREMELY USEFUL.

he ha

Like this!

A LEFTOVER INHERITED FROM MY DECEASED OLDER BROTHER.

THE WENCH HAS A FACE LIKE A HORSE

I'm jealous!

NOW, NOW

HAVEN'T I ALREADY FOUND YOU THE PERFECT BRIDE?

AFTER ALL, SHE'S SUPPOSED TO BE A GIRL OF EXQUISITE BEAUTY.

REALLY, JOFRE DOESN'T DESERVE HER.

Where did that come from?

Turkey is so fashionable!

AH, THIS MAKES ME REMEMBER A SONG I HEARD THE OTHER DAY.

TWANNG

I KNOW ALL THAT YET, I FEAR THAT SHE IS NOT DESTINED TO LIGHT THE FIRES OF MY HEART.

WHICH REMINDS ME...

HOW IS MY DEAR BROTHER CESARE?

HAVE YOU MADE HIM AN ARCH-BISHOP YET?

...

AH ...

I HAD HOPED TO CONFINE HIM TO THE CHURCH, YET HIS APTITUDE FOR MILITARY AFFAIRS IS EXTRAORDINARY.

ACTUALLY, SOON HE IS TO BE..

WHAT DID YOU SAY!?!

A CARDI-NAL!?

BUT!

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS?!

SH!!

KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN! IT'S STILL A SECRET.

MMMM

FROM NOW ON, HIS ABILITIES ARE LIKELY TO BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT

IF WE ARE TO HOLD THE REINS OF POWER IN THIS ERA..

I HAVE NO CHOICE. THAT WAS THE AGREEMENT THAT WE MADE

I DON'T DARE RISK ANGERING HIM.

CESARE'S DEMONIC POWERS WILL BE CRUCIAL.

BUT, THAT... HE'S EVIL!

WE SHOULD TURN HIM OVER TO THE INQUISI-TION!

HIS UNHOLY EXISTENCE SHOULD BE ATONED FOR UPON A BURNING STAKE!

TO MAKE SOME-THING SO FOUL A CARDINAL ...

HE...
HE'S RIGHT...

BECAUSE OF CESARE, I TOO ..

MUST FEAR THE WRATH OF THE CARDINALS ..!?!

SHOCK

.....!

WERE CESARE TO BE DISCOV-ERED ..

BOTH YOU AND I WOULD ALSO FACE THE INQUISI-TORS

ARE YOU WILLING TO BE TORTURED AND BURNT ALIVE?

AFTER ALL, WE'LL ALL SHARE THE SAME FATE.

[redacted] OF HIM, I...!

JU-LIA!

YOU MUST BE ANXIOUS, LUCRETIA.

ha ha!

OWW ...

stick stick

WHAT A STRANGE RELATIONSHIP YOU TWO HAVE

THAT YOUR DEVOTION GOES FURTHER THAN A BOND BETWEEN MERE SIBLINGS.

I MUST SAY, THOUGH, FROM THE WAY YOU LOOK AT HIM, ONE WOULD ALMOST THINK.

IT'S BECAUSE YOUR BELOVED OLDER BROTHER HAS RETURNED FROM HIS SCHOOL IN PIZA, RIGHT?

COUNT PEZ-ZARO!

step

LORD GIOV-ANNI!

AH, MY BLUSHING BRIDE!

WHAT A GLORIOUS DAY!

I...

I'M NOT ..

CLATTER

STOP!

THAT'S ENOUGH, MY LORD!

AH!

OHO, WHAT PRETTY LEGS YOU HAVE!

YOU DROPPED THIS.

...

AH!

LUCR-ETIA!

NO!

SLIP

MEDDLING WENCH!!

WHY SO FRIGHTENED?

WE ARE MARRIED, AREN'T WE?

YOU AND YOUR FAMILY THINK THAT YOU CAN MAKE A FOOL OF ME.

BUT THEN,

THAT'S HOW IT IS, ISN'T IT?

NOTHING MORE.

WOULD YOU DARE DEFY HIS WISHES?

I HAVE ONLY DONE . . .

WHAT THE POPE DEMANDED OF ME.

touch

!?

SLAP

AAH!

CUNNING BITCH, AREN'T YOU!?

AA
...
AAH!
AIN
ARGH!
!
Y...
YOU!
PAR-
DON
ME...
EXCUSE MY
INTRUSION,
BUT THAT
WAS SIMPLY
GOING TOO
FAR.
PARTICULARLY
FOR YOU,
COUNT
PEZZARO.

OH?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER ME?

CESARE!

...

I DIDN'T MEAN TO...

WHAT IS THIS?!

HIS TOUCH WAS SO LIGHT

HOW CAN IT BE THIS PAINFUL?

I WISH TO SPEAK WITH COUNT PEZZARO.

I WILL DEAL WITH YOU LATER.

?

turn

?

THEN, YOU'RE STAYING,

BRO-THER?

I WILL NOT ALLOW ANYONE TO OFFER HER SUCH AN INSULT.

LUCRETIA IS STILL JUST A CHILD.

IT WOULD BE...

BETTER IF WE MOVED OUTSIDE. DON'T YOU AGREE, COUNT?

GULP

UH...

I...I'M SO SORRY,

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED EARLIER. I DIDN'T MEAN TO STRIKE YOUR SISTER.

IT WAS JUST MY TEMPER.

YOU UNDERSTAND, RIGHT? THE POPE WON'T ALLOW ME TO LAY A FINGER ON HER.

YOU WON'T TELL HIM, WILL YOU?

IT'LL JUST BE OUR LITTLE SECRET...

slap

AH!

!?

COUNT!

ARE YOU AWARE OF THE RUMOR THAT FRANCE - OR MORE ACCURATELY, NAPLES...

IS POISED TO INVADE ITALY?

!?

THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IS IN SECRET COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS OF MILAN'S SFORTZIA FAMILY. I HAVE OBTAINED THE LETTERS MYSELF.

WHEN THE POPE FINDS OUT, HE WILL BE GRIEVOUSLY DISPLEASED.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE POSITION YOU ARE IN?

THE POPE IS ANXIOUS THAT MILAN DOES NOT SIDE WITH FRANCE IN A MISGUIDED ATTEMPT...

TO AVENGE ITSELF UPON ITS ANCIENT ENEMY, NAPLES

YOU WOULD DO WELL TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE SECURITY OF THE SFORTZIA FAMILY, AND LISTEN TO MY ADVICE.

IF THIS CONTINUES, OUR CONNECTIONS IN NAPLES MAY RENDER YOUR PRESENCE HERE... UNNECESSARY.

AFTER ALL, YOU ARE MY BELOVED BROTHER-IN-LAW.

HA, HA.

OF COURSE NOT. I'M SIMPLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

ARE ...

ARE YOU THREATENING ME, YOU IMPUDENT YOUNG...!

!

EX-CUSE ME.

drip

WH-WH AT. . IS HE?

HEY.

ARE YOU DONE YET?

YOU'LL CATCH A COLD

ripple

WHAT'S WRONG, CHIARO? IT'S LOVELY IN HERE.

WHY DON'T YOU JOIN ME?

AGH!

DO YOU REALIZE THAT IT'S AUTUMN?

The fireflies are out

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU THINKING?

I KNOW ALREADY. YOUR BODY BECOMES SATURATED WITH EVIL.

I'M GLAD THAT YOU'RE TRYING TO PURIFY YOURSELF BEFORE IT OVERWHELMS YOU.

IT'S JUST THAT I'M WORRIED THAT THE DARKNESS IS STARTING TO EAT INTO YOUR HEART.

splash

WHENEVER I USE MY POWERS,

MY BODY BURNS LIKE FIRE.

Ugh, wet hair is so tiresome

DON'T ALIGN YOURSELF WITH THE DEVIL.

YOU KNOW THAT YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO TURN BACK.

HM.

BECAUSE OF MY DESIRE FOR BLOOD?

AND THEN YOU'D HAVE TO KILL ME?

SO YOU SAY..

BUT I'M SERIOUS, YOU KNOW.

Giddy up!

YOU DON'T SOUND LIKE MUCH OF A WORLD CONQUEROR.

RECENTLY, YOU'VE BEEN FULL OF YOURSELF

HUH?

ABOUT WHAT I SAID.

MAYBE IT'S JUST NOT POSSIBLE TO TAKE THIS WORLD BY THE SWORD ALONE...

THAT'S WHY I HAD TO USE MY POWER.

HE...

HE HIT LUCRETIA.

YOU REALLY ...

ARE A GOOD BROTHER, AREN'T YOU?

Hen.

tmp...

tmp

A HORSE-MAN AT THIS HOUR?

!?

DON'T, Chi-ARO.

!

whinny

CHIARO . . .!

thud

sorry

HAH.

JUST AS I THOUGHT. IT'S TOO AMUSING!

And hastily written, too!

A LETTER FROM COUNT PEZZARO TO MILAN'S IL MORO.

WHY WOULD PEZZARO NEED TO DISPATCH A SECRET MESSENGER TO CONVEY SOMETHING AS STUPID AS THAT?

I don't get it

HAHA HAHA HA!

PFT!

BUT WHAT THE HELL IS THIS STUFF ABOUT "AUTHENTIC ITALIAN RECIPES?"

IT SAYS HERE, "LETTERS FROM THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR," EXACTLY AS YOU TOLD HIM.

Reading by moonlight

THIS..

CONFIRMS THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN FRANCE AND MILAN.

I WANT YOU TO WATCH COUNT PEZZARO.

FOR A LONG TIME NOW, THAT MAN HAS BEEN PLAYING THE FOOL.

YOU'RE CERTAIN THAT FRANCE IS SET TO INVADE?

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW UNTIL THE STORM BREAKS.

WHEN IT DOES, THE ENSUING CHAOS WILL ENGULF ALL OF ITALY.

ALL THE PETTY DISAGREE-MENTS AND FOOLISH VENDETTAS THAT DIVIDE US NOW,

WILL BE SWEPT ASIDE BY THE FORCE OF THE GALE.

THAT'S WHAT I'M WAITING FOR...

I'M NOT SURE YET.

BUT STILL,

THE TEMPEST DRAWS CLOSE.

THE FREEDOM TO SPREAD MY WINGS

AND SOAR UPON THE RAGING WINDS...

IN RELATION TO THE DESIGNATION OF COMMISSIONS,

I AM PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE ORDINATION OF OUR NEWEST CARDINALS.

THUMP

I MUST OBJECT!

LORD LUNATTI AND LORD GRIMANNI ARE DISCERNING SCHOLARS AND BOTH WELL ESTABLISHED.

SIMILARLY, LORD IPPOLITO DESTE IS YOUNG, BUT HIS GENIUS IS UNQUESTIONABLE. HIS PRODIGIOUS ABILITIES ARE EVIDENT TO EVERYONE.

BUT THIS!

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF APPOINTING CESARE BORGIA TO THIS ASSEMBLY?! THERE CAN BE NO EXPLANATION OTHER THAN SHEER NEPOTISM!

Right!

Exactly!

We object!

FURTHERMORE,

IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT AN ILLEGITIMATE BASTARD LIKE CESARE COULD EVER TRULY SERVE GOD!

IT'S BLASPHEMY!

OHO, CARDINAL ROVERE!

IT SEEMS THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY FORGOTTEN ...

THE PAPAL PROCLAMATION THAT THIS ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZED ONLY DAYS AGO.

I...

BUT... THAT WAS ...!

HE CAN'T SERIOUSLY CLAIM THAT...

SILENCE!

BUT ..

THAT ...!

gulp

AS SUCH, LORD CESARE IS HEREBY APPOINTED A CARDINAL

IF THERE ARE ANY OBJECTIONS, RAISE YOUR HAND.

IT CLEARLY ESTAB-LISHED...

THAT ARCH-BISHOP CESARE BORGIA OF VALENTIA IS A LEGITIMATE CHILD FROM THE MARRIAGE BETWEEN DOMENICO DARINNAN AND VANOSSA KATANEI.

FORGET THAT YOU EVER RAISED THE SUBJECT, CARDINAL ROVERE.

THIS APPOINTMENT IS BOTH JUST AND IMPARTIAL. WE WILL IGNORE YOUR RIDICU-LOUS ALLEGATIONS OF NEPOTISM.

GRR. ..!

HOW DARE HE FORCE THROUGH SUCH A PHONY PROCLAMA-TION!

THAT ARROGANT OLD GEEZER!

CURSE THAT...

ヤ89ℓ

WHY APPOINT THAT MAN A CARDINAL ANYWAY?

ONCE THIS POPE DIES, IT WILL FINALLY BE MY TURN TO REIGN.

IT'S RUMOURED THAT HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BRIBERY DURING THE LAST PAPAL ELECTION.

YES, THAT'S TRUE.

BUT I DON'T THINK THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.

THERE'S SOME-THING MORE...

!?!

IT IS MERELY A SYMBOL OF MY INEXPERIENCE.

PRAY EXCUSE ME

I WORRIED NEEDLESSLY. AFTER ALL WHAT CAN THIS YOUTH ACHIEVE?

OHO

SO, YOU'RE ALREADY PARADING IN THE RED ROBES OF A CARDINAL, EH?

YOUR ROBE IS A BIT SHABBY, DON'T YOU THINK?

AFTER ALL, SUCH COSTUMES ARE MEANINGLESS.

MY ABILITY TO DESTROY YOU IS HARDLY DEFINED BY SOMETHING SO NEGLIGIBLE.

IS HE SERIOUS?

!

BUT SURELY, ONCE RODERIGO... ONCE THE POPE DIES...

I HAVE TO GET AWAY FROM ROME!

I MUST FLEE!

DASH!

AH! LORD RO-VERE!

W-WAIT!

GREETING HUH?

WE... SAME-THING LIKE THAT ANYWAY

HE'S RUNNING PRETTY FAST

WHAT DID YOU SAY TO HIM?

I WAS JUST A GREETING

THAT MAN IS DANGER-OUS!

JUST THE IDEA OF YOU AS A CATTLE

BUT DON'T MIND THE RUDE

WHAT?

twirl

Well?

HOW'S THIS?

twirl

IDIOT!

Ha ha!

SO, DO YOU PLAN ...

TO JOIN THE RANKS OF THE ANCIENT CAESARS?

WHAT ELSE DO YOU THINK...

MY NAME MEANS?

MY FATHER THOUGHT HE COULD ENTRAP ME WITH THE NAME OF A GOD

HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE MISGUIDED

I..

I HAVE NO INTEREST IN HEAVEN

ACTUALLY, WHAT FASCINATES ME IS...

MORE ...

WHAT'S WRONG?

I KNOW

THEN, WHY?

A... AH.

WHY DON'T YOU GO TO LUCRETIA? SHE'S WATCHING YOU.

.....

IF YOU WERE HER BROTHER...

HOW COULD YOU MEET HER GAZE?

AHH I SEE

EVEN SO THAT GIRL

BUT, STILL ...

THEY ...

WERE LEFT BY THE WINDOW ON THE SECOND FLOOR.

THAT'S THE STRANGEST PART.

HOW BEAUTIFUL! WHERE ARE THEY FROM?

JU-WA!

LOOK AT THESE FLOWERS!

...

WELL, I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO BE SATISFIED WITH THIS.

AT LEAST YOU'RE FINALLY SMILING AGAIN.

SFX: CRASH

DAMN! WHY DID THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN?

STOP!

I?

HEY!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?

AH!

IT'S A THIEF!

I WASN'T PAYING ENOUGH ATTEN-TION!

dash

HE WENT THAT WAY!

FOL-LOW HIM!

SFX: THUMP

bwiiiiin...

HUH?

rustle

I SHOULD HAVE LOST THEM BY NOW.

rustle

rustle

I'VE NEVER HEARD ANYTHING LIKE THIS MUSIC (BEFORE IT HAS SUCH A STRANGE TIMBRE

bwiiiimm...

bwiinnnn.....

IT RESONATES LIKE A GOLDEN BEL...

!

WHO ARE YOU?

OVER THERE ..

CLANG

DAMN IT!

This day just gets worse /and worse

!

HEY!

IT'S YOU!

stab

UH !

HOAN !?

think

WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?

I REMEMBER YOU... YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM BACK THEN!

HOW UNEX-PECTED!

SO,

WHAT ARE YOU? SOME KIND OF SPY?

THAT'S IT!

THAT MUST BE HOW YOU KNEW THAT THIS WAS PRINCE JEM'S PALACE.

DON'T BOTHER TRYING TO HIDE YOUR FACE.

I NEVER FORGET PEOPLE WHO I HATE.

WHO THE HELL IS THIS GUY!?

YOU'RE SO HANDSOME,

IT'LL BE FUN TO CARVE YOU UP.

I'll gouge out your eyes!

And then, I'll slice off your nose!

Hee hee

I THINK I'LL CUT OFF YOUR FACE.

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOUR TORTURE PARTICULARLY PAINFUL.

I...I DIDN'T KNOW!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ANY-WAY?

HO-AN.

THIS MAN SNUCK IN...

YOU'RE TAKING THIS FAR TOO LIGHTLY!

HO-AN.

RELEASE THIS MAN.

I SEE NO EVIDENCE THAT HE IS AN ASSASSIN.

PRINCE JEM!

MORTIFIED

WAA AH!

I'M SORRY! I'M SO SORRY! PLEASE DON'T HATE ME!

P... PRINCE JEM!

Is he really Cesare's brother?

He's nuts!

MY HEART HOLDS NO ENMITY TOWARDS THIS MAN.

PLE-ASE...

DO NOT FORCE ME TO SCORN YOU.

I WILL BE FINE.

I WOULD SIMPLY LIKE TO SPEAK TO THIS MAN ALONE FOR A MINUTE.

BUT...

PLEASE.

HOW UNFOR-TUNATE.

WELL, YOU ARE NOW FREE TO GO.

!

YOU'RE JUST GOING TO LET ME RUN AWAY?

That's really weird...

BE-SIDES ...

YOU WERE DRAWN TO THE SOUND OF MY SITAR, WEREN'T YOU?

THAT ALONE MAKES YOU MOST WELCOME.

FEEL FREE TO COME AND LISTEN ANYTIME.

I WILL LEAVE THE SIDE GATE UNLOCKED.

NO-THING.

?

BESIDES ...?

BESIDES ...

YOU REEK OF BLOOD.

CANTARELLA VOLUME 2 - END